

NEGOTIATE BORDER SECURITY

(Mr. LEVIN of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, while the longest government shutdown in our country's history finally ended over the weekend, its effects continue to plague working families.

For 35 days the President held hostage the paychecks, financial security, and health and wellbeing of hundreds of thousands of Federal workers, including 5,200 from Michigan.

The President's stunt did nothing to advance real border security discussions and resulted in a colossal waste of time and resources. He cost the American economy \$11 billion; ironically, nearly twice as much as he wanted for an ineffective border wall.

As the President threatens another shutdown, I rise today to demand that he never again use this cruel tactic, and to, instead, come to the table, the negotiating table in good faith.

Democrats support effective border security solutions, and we are here to talk so long as working families are not used as pawns in the political process.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

FIRE SAFETY REMAINS A DIRE ISSUE

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remind people, that although it is wintertime, a rainy season, a stormy season, that we are still in a dire circumstance on fire safety in our forested areas, California, of the West, and many areas of the United States.

So for us to just be comfortable during the wintertime, during the rainy season and not think about it would be in error. We need to do much to catch up on the forest inventory we have across this country, across the West.

That will require USDA, the U.S. Forest Service, our States, our local governments, Tribes, and everybody to be able to coordinate much better than we have in the past to reduce this fuel load, this inventory we have in our forests that makes it so dangerous when fire season comes around once again.

We have seen that with so many devastating fires in the West, just this year in my own district, the Carr fire in the Redding area, and the Camp fire in the Paradise area.

Many factors go into what causes these fires, but we can at least be proactive in thinning our Federal forests, thinning the material that needs to come out of there, putting people

back to work doing that, using this material for biomass, generating electricity, and the wood and paper products that we all need and enjoy.

We need to move fast-forward on the pace and scale of what it takes to make our forested areas fire safe, healthy, good for the economy, and good for all of us.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO HOUSE DEMOCRACY PARTNERSHIP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to section 104(a) of House Resolution 6, 116th Congress, and the order of the House of January 3, 2019, of the following Member to the House Democracy Partnership:

Mr. PRICE, North Carolina, Chairman

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO MEXICO-UNITED STATES INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276h and the order of the House of January 3, 2019, of the following Member on the part of the House to the Mexico-United States Interparliamentary Group:

Mr. CUELLAR, Texas, Chairman

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO CANADA-UNITED STATES INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276d and the order of the House of January 3, 2019, of the following Member on the part of the House to the Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group:

Mr. HIGGINS, New York, Chairman

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO UNITED STATES GROUP OF THE NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 1928a, and the order of the House of January 3, 2019, of the following Member on the part of the House to the United States Group of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly:

Mr. CONNOLLY, Virginia, Chairman

THE PEOPLE'S NIGHT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALKER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and introduce extraneous material into the RECORD on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALKER. Madam Speaker, tonight is a reminder of exactly whose House this belongs to. We hear much in the political circles as far as who makes the call and who gets to speak when. Today, customarily, is a very unique and special day had our President not been disinclined.

Well, tonight we will have a few Members speaking on the importance of hearing from the Members that Americans have elected to talk about the issues of the past 2 years, and some of the things that we need to accomplish over the next couple of years.

We have some wonderful speakers this afternoon and this evening, to be able to share some of the topics that are important to our constituents as well as to all Americans.

The first speaker I would like to introduce to you is Mr. MIKE JOHNSON, who represents the Fourth District of Louisiana, and is currently leading the largest caucus in all of Congress as chairman of the Republican Study Committee.

Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from the great State of North Carolina for inviting me to speak on this topic.

I stand before you in disbelief and in sorrow tonight. It has been mentioned that the State of the Union Address was originally scheduled to take place today, and it has been rescheduled for next week.

I think it is appropriate for us then to bring attention to what is happening here in the people's House. I think the American people deserve to know that. As we speak, I think the American people need to know that partisan tactics are underway by certain House Democrats to undermine American values and traditions that have been cherished and practiced here since the time of our founding.

As we finally begin our committee work in the 116th Congress, I am proud to serve again on the Judiciary Committee and the House Natural Resources Committee. We have just begun the process of adopting our committee rules there, and today, we were issued a list of proposed rule changes that the Democrat majority and the Natural Resources Committee will apparently push through at our hearing tomorrow.

Among the radical new changes to the rules is a stunning action to remove the phrase, "So help me God" from the oath taken by witnesses before they testify to Congress. Did you hear that? Let me repeat it. Among the radical new changes in our committee is a stunning action to remove the phrase "So help me God" from the oath taken by witnesses before they testify to Congress.

This latest example of the aggressive surge to the far left that we are seeing

has to be stopped. This new agenda is threatening the very fabric of our Nation. Throughout America's history, our Presidents and elected officials have taken a solemn oath of office including the words, "So help me God."

This goes back to our founding. Since the Judiciary Act of 1789, every justice of the U.S. Supreme Court and all lower-court judges have taken an oath of office which concludes with the same phrase and, of course, every court of law across this land, in every one of them, all witnesses have always been sworn in for testimony with those same concluding words.

For more than two centuries, immigrants from all around the world have come here and taken America's oath of allegiance to become naturalized citizens which also concludes with the phrase, "So help me God."

Madam Speaker, some of our Democrat colleagues need to be reminded of our history. Why did the Founders institute this practice? Well, let's remember what they said. Our first President, George Washington, was the Father of our country. And in his famous farewell address, he gave his advice that echoes down through the generations to you and to me as the elected Representatives of the people. He said, famously: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports."

John Adams was our second President. He came next. What did he say? He said: "Our Constitution is made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

In other words, what these two Founders and their fellow patriots all understood from our history, was that there are many important rules and practices that can help sustain and build a healthy republic, but the key they said, the essential foundation of a republic has to be a common commitment among the citizenry to the principles of religion and morality and accountability to God himself.

The Founders acknowledged this self-evident truth that all men are created equal and that God gives all men the same inalienable rights. However, they knew, that in order to maintain a government "of the people, by the people, for the people," as Lincoln later said, those inalienable rights must be exercised in a responsible manner.

They, thus, believed in liberty that is legitimately constrained by a common sense of morality, and a healthy fear of the God who granted all men our rights.

The Founders understood that all men are fallen and that power corrupts. They also knew that no amount of institutional checks and balances or decentralization of power and civil authorities would be sufficient to maintain a just government if the men in charge had no fear of eternal judgment by a power higher than their temporal institutions.

That is just a quick review of our history, but that is the reason we conclude our oaths in this country with the phrase "So help me God." Heaven help us if we ever forget that obligation.

Inscribed on the third panel of the Jefferson Memorial right here in Washington, D.C., just a few blocks from here, is his sobering reminder to every single one of us as American citizens. He said this, it is right there on the wall: "God who gave us life gave us liberty. Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are the gift of God? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that his justice cannot sleep forever."

Madam Speaker, I just want you to know and I want the American people to know back home here on the night that should have been the State of the Union Address, as we talk about the State of our union, I want you to know that we are going to fight this radical rules change tomorrow in our committee because it matters. And we will continue to raise the alarm about the dangerous leftist agenda that is taking hold here in this Congress.

While I am at it, I would be remiss if I did not note, Madam Speaker, that this is not the end. The radical agenda is advancing in State legislatures now as well.

Last week, New York's Governor signed the infamous Reproductive Health Act, the RHA, into law. This bill's extreme provisions eliminate protections for the unborn, endangering the health of mothers, and eliminate New York's few remaining safeguards for developing human life.

□ 1545

As enacted, the RHA establishes the fundamental right to abortion. It permits nonphysicians to perform abortions; it repeals State protections for children born during an abortion; and it eliminates all fetal homicide provisions. The bill's broad health exception allows for an abortion at, literally, any point in their pregnancy.

Look, this measure is unconscionable. It is disturbing. And we expect our friends and all people of good conscience—even on the other side of the aisle—to condemn this outrageous attack on the vulnerable.

Madam Speaker, we are forgetting our history. We have to remember why we as Americans believe in the sanctity of human life.

I will conclude with this, by just reminding us, again, that our Founders openly acknowledged, they broadly proclaimed what has been called the American Creed. It is listed in the second paragraph of the Declaration that "we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal," and that God is the one that gives us our rights, and our rights are unalienable. The first listed is the right to life.

Have we thought about why the Founders said that? Because they un-

derstood that every single person is made in the image of God. And because every person is made in the image of God, every single person has inestimable dignity and value. Your value is not related in any way to where you grew up or the color of your skin or how intelligent you may be, what your talents are, what you make for a living. Those are irrelevant. Your value is inherent because it is given to you by your creator.

Madam Speaker, I conclude with this: As we reflect upon the State of the Union, the state of the Union is strong in so many ways, but we have our challenges. Among the challenges is an assault, an aggressive agenda to remove and erase these critical and important foundations.

So here on the People's Night, here in the people's House, we want to remind the people of what is happening on our watch. We will stand against these things. We will continue to defend what is best about our American traditions, and we are honored to have that opportunity.

Mr. WALKER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his wonderful words of wisdom and inspiration.

A lot of times in the House, we hear politicians say, even throughout our State, that we are doing things for the people. And I guess, to some degree, some of that is okay. But for us to be successful, I think we have to get back to the place that we are doing things with the people. No one embodies that more in the House than past chairman and ranking member of Ways and Means, Mr. KEVIN BRADY.

In taking a moment of personal privilege here, I get a chance to meet lots of figures: lots of politicians, lots of Presidents, kings, and queens throughout this country—and throughout this world, actually—but few people I have ever met who carried the servant spirit and the servant heart more than our top Republican on Ways and Means.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY), proudly representing Texas' Eighth District.

Mr. BRADY. Madam Speaker, I rise this afternoon, first, to thank the gentleman, my friend from the Sixth District of North Carolina, Congressman MARK WALKER, for his leadership in our Republican House Conference, for his leadership in helping improve the lives of not just North Carolinians, but every American, and, tonight, for organizing today's Special Order, "The People's Night," #withthepeople, on a night we had hoped our President would be here, as tradition requires, to give the State of the Union.

I want to thank those who are here tonight. We heard from Mr. JOHNSON and my colleagues who are speaking tonight on the issues that are so important to the American people. Whether it is jobs, better wages, a stronger economy, more affordable and accessible healthcare, supporting resources for our troops and veterans, securing our border, standing with Israel,

or, as Mr. JOHNSON pointed out, protecting the lives of the innocent unborn, I am proud to join you in this fight.

Let's talk about the economy and jobs. We have seen such dramatic difference the last 2 years. Remember, before that, the economy had struggled for more than a decade. Every expert in Washington was telling the American people: Just get used to that. Get used to your paychecks being flat. Get used to jobs moving overseas. Get used to your kids coming out of school with fair to low opportunities. That is the new normal.

Well, Republicans and President Trump believed there was a better future, a brighter future for America, so we went to work. As a result, because of our commitment to lifting red tape off of our local small businesses and delivering the first overhaul of our Tax Code in more than 30 years, America is back, and the American people are doing better because of it: wages are rising the fastest in a decade; America's economy is growing the fastest in more than a decade; and unemployment is at one of the lowest levels in decades.

We did this by working with President Trump to lift more than \$33 billion in red tape off our local businesses so they can hire again, so they can grow again.

Then we tackled this terrible Tax Code that had been placed, and put in place one that lowers taxes for all Americans, that helps small businesses grow and invest, that doubles the child tax credit, that doubles the standard deductions and changes the dynamics so that jobs investment comes back to America rather than just being stranded overseas. And, boy, what a difference it is making.

Due to the Republican pro-growth policies and President Trump's tax cuts, our economy exceeded 3 percent growth over the past year. That never happened under our previous President. So much for that new normal of slow growth.

More than 5 million jobs have been created since President Trump was elected, including more than 2.5 million since the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was signed into law. Last week, our unemployment jobless claims were at a 50-year low. That is a 50-year best for that.

The unemployment rate for African Americans fell to the lowest rate ever on record. For Asian and Hispanic Americans, their unemployment rates are the best we have seen in decades.

For those who are disabled, for those coming out of prison, for those without high school educations, for those who are teenagers, the job opportunities are the best they have seen in decades. The unemployment rate, in some cases, is the best since we have started recording it.

And the group I watched the most, sort of the underdogs in every community, are those who didn't even get a

chance to finish high school or get a GED, that are always the first to be laid off, always the last to be rehired. Well, under this new economy, the unemployment for those without a high school degree is the best since America started recording it.

So our brothers and sisters in our communities and neighborhoods have more job opportunities than they have seen in a long time, and their paychecks are going up as well, the fastest in more than a decade.

It had been stuck flat for so many Americans for so long, it just was hard for families to make ends meet. But now, with higher paychecks and a tax cut for over 90 percent of American workers, families now have a budget that goes a little farther each week, where they can invest in themselves and their American Dream rather than in Washington's dream.

Consumer confidence has soared. American manufacturing is back. In fact, the National Association of Manufacturers, their index has the highest annual growth in jobs in history, over the past year. In fact, last year, manufacturing in America added almost 290,000 new jobs.

Finally, small business optimism is through the roof. They are investing and hiring and growing again on Main Streets all across America.

This didn't happen by accident. Republicans working closely with President Trump decided there was a brighter future for America. We could get out of the doldrums. We could give people opportunities. We could boost their paycheck, and we could bring jobs back from overseas. That is the difference the last 2 years has made for America.

And when the State of the Union is held, President Trump, from the dais behind me, can talk about the huge difference he has made in the American economy and what it means for working families and small businesses along Main Street.

Madam Speaker, I again thank the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER) for his leadership and for organizing the People's Night, and I am proud to be part of it.

Mr. WALKER. Madam Speaker, I thank the ranking Republican on our Ways and Means Committee, KEVIN BRADY, for the wonderful service that he continues to display not just to the good people of the Lone Star State, but to all Americans.

We had a lot of retirements this past election, but not all the adults left the building. We have a wonderful veteran and former Korean veteran—actually, OB/GYN doctor, who delivered nearly 5,000 babies—the ranking member, past chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. I ask PHIL ROE from Tennessee to share a few things on his heart; because there are few people who have had his experience level, and I believe it would behoove us all to listen to the words of wisdom from Mr. PHIL ROE.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVID P. ROE).

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER) for the work he has done as our past chairman of the Republican Study Committee and now in leadership and our Conference, and I appreciate the opportunity to be here tonight.

I remember, about 2 years ago, I was up late at night watching the election returns, and then-President-elect Trump announced his acceptance speech. He was not 3 minutes into his speech when he said that he wanted to help our Nation's veterans.

It was very near and dear to my heart because I am a generation of veterans. That was during the Vietnam war, and we were not so much appreciated and treated rather shabbily by our country.

So I knew what was in President Trump's heart, and I wish he were here tonight to be able to express that. Because every time I have been in the room with him, he has appreciated the service of our Nation's 21 million living veterans.

Madam Speaker, 2 years ago, we had an opportunity to do something about it, and, in a bipartisan way—and I do want to give thanks to both sides of the aisle. This would not have happened without their help. We started on a mission to really reform the way the VA provides healthcare.

For those out there who don't know about our VA system, there are over 150 VA medical centers, over 800 outpatient clinics that we have.

The VA is divided into, actually, three parts: It is healthcare, and it is benefits, and it is cemeteries.

If you haven't visited a VA cemetery, you should, because it will really make your heart feel good to see how we treat our Nation's heroes.

We started, 2 years ago, with the idea that not all employees at work at the VA are good employees and should be there. When I got to Congress in 2010—I have been here, now, 10 years—there were 250,000 employees at the VA.

Now, the VA employs almost 370,000 people. But there were some egregious acts that some of these folks had carried out, and they could not be fired.

We passed a bill in a bipartisan way that allows us to terminate poorly performing employees while maintaining the rights of those employees who are there, 99.9 percent of whom are doing a great job for our Nation's heroes.

The second thing most of us Congressmen hear about is disability claims. When I got to Congress in 2009, there were a million backlogged disability claims, veterans sometimes waiting until they died to get their disability claim adjudicated. That number now is down to around 350,000—far too many.

We passed a bill at that point, about 18 months ago, the appeals reform bill, and it has been piloted—called the RAMP program—which has sped up.

Last Friday, I was in Nashville, Tennessee, going to our regional office to

see how they were doing, and I ran into a gentleman who was using the VA—just happened to be there, a veteran, about my age. He said: ‘I have been trying for 7 years to get my claim adjudicated, get taken care of.’ In 90 days, with the new RAMP program—he had waited 7 years. In 90 days, it was solved.

That program goes live next month. The Secretary has approved it, and, hopefully, now we can speed the claims and appeals process up.

A third bill that we passed, that I used in 1975 when I got out of the Army and came back stateside from the Southeast Asia, is called the GI bill. For those out there, it is an education bill, and it was written, initially, by a World War II vet Harry G. Colmery. Mr. Colmery wrote a bill and thought that we could really change our Nation by educating veterans who were getting out of the military; and we did just that, and it changed our Nation.

I am still appreciative, to this day, of the \$300 a month that my country invested in me when I had a young family, when I went back to finish my education at the University of Tennessee, College of Medicine. I was able to use that money to help me finish my training and my education. But that terminated at 10 years. If I didn’t use it within 10 years, it went away.

Today, we passed a bill, fully paid for, that allows a veteran to use their GI bill the rest of their life. And we know if someone is 23 when they get out, when they are 40, maybe they might need retraining. Well, now, they can get that.

The second thing we did in that bill—again, very personal to me—is some veterans hadn’t served long enough. If they earned a Purple Heart, they didn’t get the full benefit because they hadn’t served enough time. Now, if you shed blood for this Nation, you get the full GI bill, and it should be that.

We also improved payment for our Gold Star families and others, and we have added time for technical training. We know those courses sometimes take longer.

We also funded, what is called the Veterans Choice Program three times during the last Congress, and that is how veterans get care outside the VA. We know that most VA hospitals can’t provide everything to everybody, and many veterans have to travel long, long distances to see a doctor, to see a specialist.

□ 1600

I was visiting Oregon a couple years ago and found out that one congressional district in Oregon had more square miles than the State of Tennessee did. We had to develop a bill that allowed veterans in rural areas to see a doctor and veterans in urban areas to do so.

We passed the VA MISSION Act, which was signed into law, appropriately, on June the 6th of 2018, 74 years after D-day.

What this bill will do is the following. It will revise how veterans get their care outside the VA. It has a second very important part called the VA caregiver bill. Catastrophically injured, post-9/11 GIs who were injured in battle now can have a caregiver given a stipend to stay home so that they can stay out of the hospital.

But that did not apply to pre-9/11 veterans, Vietnam-era veterans like I am, Korea, and World War II. We now provide that benefit for those veterans.

Thirdly, we are looking at what is called an asset review of the VA. This is something that really surprised me when I looked at the data. The actual number of patients in hospital beds peaked in 1981. The population has grown 40 percent, and we actually have 10 percent fewer people in hospital beds than we did almost 40 years ago.

So medicine is changing, and the VA needs to change. It needs to go through a self-evaluation, get right-sized, and get the VA healthcare out where the patients live, where the veterans are.

We know that patients are moving, veterans are moving, from the Northeast to the South and West, so we need to put those assets there. That is what the VA bill will do.

There are a few other small things, Madam Speaker, that we did that might not be big to some people but were huge to me, because my Scoutmaster was killed in 1965 in Vietnam. His name was Thomas E. Thayer. He was a first sergeant in the 101st Airborne Division, a great man with four children.

When we have Gold Star families that sign a lease, let’s say—and we had this happen where they signed a lease. One was in North Carolina, and the person would not release that woman from her lease, and she had to pay that.

Now, if you lose your husband or your wife in combat, you can get out of those. We also did the same thing for cable TV, for internet, and for cell phones. If you are deployed, you can’t use those things, so you can get out of those long-term contracts.

The Veterans’ Affairs Committee passed over 80 bills. Almost 50 of them were signed into law to help our Nation’s veterans.

We did have one very disappointing failure to me, and I have already dropped a bill this term. It is called the blue water Navy bill. Just to let our audience out there, the folks viewing this, know what it is, there are veterans who served on surface ships in the territorial waters just off Vietnam, off the coast. Actually, Agent Orange was used in Korea, where I was. If you put your boots on the ground, then you are given the presumption for certain diseases for disability benefits. That does not occur for those men and women who served on surface ships.

We passed it 382-0 in the House and could not get it moved in the Senate. We are going to give them an opportunity to do the right thing this next Congress.

Madam Speaker, it has been a privilege for me to serve for 10 years on the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee, and we are committed in that committee to continuing to serve our Nation’s heroes and to give them the benefits they have earned that allow us to be free.

I thank Mr. WALKER for allowing me a few minutes to come down and share these few things we did for our Nation’s heroes.

Mr. WALKER. Madam Speaker, I thank Dr. PHIL ROE for sharing. The gentleman is one of the heroes around here. He not only talks the talk, but he walks the walk.

Speaking of somebody who walks the walk, that is DAN CRENSHAW from Texas’ Second District, a 10-year Navy veteran, a lieutenant commander. He is one bad dude. I would probably use a different expression, but my mother may be watching at this particular time.

“Saturday Night Live” made him famous, but his work already has put him out as one of our leaders. It is my privilege to introduce and to hear from the former lieutenant commander.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas, Mr. DAN CRENSHAW.

Mr. CRENSHAW. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for setting this up and for having me speak here today.

I rise today to address the urgent issue of border security. There are two elements to the border debate. One is political, and one is policy.

The political element consists of the circumstances regarding the shutdown, the negotiations or lack thereof, and the points of compromise from either side.

The policy side is simply the question of whether or not we need a wall as part of comprehensive border security.

Let me begin with the political gamesmanship.

Democratic leadership has been running a victory lap this week because they “won” the shutdown. I keep wondering, what exactly did they win?

If you think winning means a porous border with 400,000 people apprehended every year, then your definition of winning is different than mine. If you think winning means standing strong against any sort of negotiation or compromise that would have allowed Federal workers finally to be paid, then your definition of winning is different than mine.

The President didn’t cave to Democrats. The President gave compassion to Federal workers who needed it. If that is your idea of losing, then you and I have different definitions of what it means to lose.

The truth is that the President has compromised time after time because, for us, this is not about who wins or loses the political game; it is about securing the border.

First, the President agreed that a 2,000-mile, sea-to-shining-sea wall

would be a logistical difficulty, so he agreed to 234 miles of fencing, a mere tenth of his original campaign promise.

Then the President agreed to \$5.7 billion in border wall funding instead of the originally requested \$25 billion, a fifth of the original request.

Democrats then said that they could discuss border security only if the government was open, so the President opened the government.

At every turn, the President has reached out and compromised in order to get a deal done. And at every turn, Democrats scoffed at compromise.

This brings us to the second element of this great debate, the policy element. Democrats have laughed at a wall. They call it medieval and ineffective, and they dismiss it without any rationale or reasoning.

The reality is that walls do work, as every rational security expert acknowledges. Border agents overwhelmingly attest to this. After all, the President's plan came from the experts at the Department of Homeland Security.

An integral part of this multifaceted plan is a 234-mile border wall. Everywhere we put walls, illegal crossings drop. Look at San Diego, El Centro, Tucson, and El Paso. The drop in illegal immigration and apprehensions after constructing a wall is enormous and immediate, yet Democrats pretend these facts don't exist.

They point to common myths about how walls function. They like to claim people will just climb over or tunnel under them. Oh, yeah? Just like that?

Well, I am a Navy SEAL, and I know better than most what it takes to infiltrate hardened areas. I would much rather be infiltrating a place with no barriers than one with a giant, 20-plus-foot wall. The planning considerations, training, and equipment necessary are considerable. And, yes, it takes a lot more than a tall ladder, especially when discussing huge groups of migrants like the ones we are seeing.

The obvious truth is that walls make a difference and clearly mitigate movement, and we actually all used to agree on this.

Democrats claim they are for security but would prefer a virtual wall with sensors, drones, cameras, et cetera. That is fine, and that is exactly why that technology is included in our plan, but to say we need only that technology is effectively asking our Border Patrol to chase migrants endlessly across large swaths of territory.

It is one thing for a sensor to go off when we see a group of migrants go by. But guess what? When we see that go off, they keep going unimpeded. Asking our border agents to simply chase them down when there are literally hundreds crossing each day is complete insanity.

This dishonest, so-called debate must end. We must start having serious discussions and secure our border because that is what the American people want. That is what it means to be with the people.

Mr. WALKER. What a privilege it is for me to serve with Lieutenant Commander DAN CRENSHAW, two Bronze Stars a Purple Heart. He has sacrificed much for this country and serves with honor and integrity.

Speaking of service, somebody who serves next door to my district in North Carolina is the past chairwoman and top Republican on our Education and Labor Committee. If there is anyone who works any harder among the 434, 435 Members, I have not met that person yet. It is my privilege to honor and to acknowledge her.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina, Ms. VIRGINIA FOXX.

Ms. FOXX of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I thank the vice chairman of our conference for his very, very kind words. We are neighbors in North Carolina, friends, and colleagues here who are concerned about the very same issues that face our country.

We are worried about many, many, many things. We worry about the absence of a wall. We worry about the need for more national security. I know that we also worry and share the concern with what has happened in this Chamber in the last few weeks when we have heard a few loud voices whose rhetoric has completely departed from the bipartisan consensus on policy toward Israel.

Just last May, for the 70th anniversary of Israel's independence, the House passed, by unanimous consent, a resolution that I introduced with two of my Democrat colleagues supporting robust, bilateral relations with Israel globally and fairness in its treatment in multilateral fora.

The House of Representatives unanimously sent a message to the U.N. and the world that respect for Israel's national sovereignty and broad recognition of its statehood is a priority for U.S. national security and achieving peace in the Middle East.

Over the past couple weeks, though, some new Members of this body have cast a cloud over this Chamber's long-time priority of the U.S.-Israel relationship. It has been suggested that support for Israel represents a betrayal of one's patriotism and that Israel has no right to exist.

I reject that position. The simple truth is that, throughout history, Israel has made numerous concessions in the pursuit of peace while seeking only the right to exist. Opponents of the Jewish state don't seem to understand that supporting our ally is a matter of national security.

On that basis, anti-Israel bias runs counter to advancing our national interests in the Middle East. Perpetuating the false narratives that there is an occupied Palestinian territory and that the Jewish people do not have any connection to the land only undermine the efforts to bring peace and stability to the region.

Other statements that Israel has "hypnotized" the world harken back to

an age of extreme insensitivity to Israel at best and a new acceptance of anti-Semitic norms at worst.

By our own State Department's definition, applying double standards that require Israel behave in a manner that is not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation and denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination are anti-Semitic beliefs.

We must reject this rhetoric and continue to support Israel as the major strategic partner that this body has long enshrined in our laws, our policy priorities, and our hearts and minds. With that, we are also improving our national security.

Mr. WALKER. Madam Speaker, I thank Representative FOXX for sharing her heart and our continued pro-Israel stance.

There are few who would be able to speak more to that issue than one of our two Jewish Members in the House, the co-chair of the House Republican Israeli Caucus and an Iraqi war veteran. Some would say he has three beautiful daughters, but I think he just married well and has two children. He serves on our Foreign Affairs Committee and is a classmate of mine from the 114th Congress. It is my privilege to introduce and to hear from him.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York, Mr. LEE ZELDIN.

□ 1615

Mr. ZELDIN. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. WALKER for his leadership in our conference and his great representation of his district. It is an honor to be joining the gentleman tonight for this important time on the House floor.

I come here to appeal to all my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, Republicans and Democrats, to reject the anti-Israel and anti-Semitic hatred that we are starting to see infiltrate American politics and even the Halls of Congress.

It is important that we all come together, that we work together to not empower, not embrace, not associate with individuals and rhetoric and policy that promotes this anti-Israel and anti-Semitic hatred, but that we reject it.

It was just a couple weeks ago that this Chamber came together nearly unanimously to reject white supremacy. What is taking so long for House Democratic leadership to schedule a vote on H. Res. 72 that I introduced with Congressman BUDD, Congresswoman STEFANIK, Congressman WALKER as a cosponsor, and others as well? Why can't we come together as forcefully and urgently to reject that anti-Semitism and that anti-Israel hatred?

We have House Democrats who have associated with, taken pictures with, embraced Louis Farrakhan. He said: "So when they talk about Farrakhan, call me a hater, you do what they do, call me an anti-Semite. Stop it, I'm anti-termite." Louis Farrakhan said that last year.

He also said: "Satanic Jews have infected the whole world with poison and deceit."

This is offensive to me, as someone who is Jewish. But I am talking to colleagues who aren't Jewish, and they are offended as well by Farrakhan and the fact that there are Members of this Chamber who associate with this person.

In 1984, Farrakhan said about Adolph Hitler: "He was a very great man."

Activist Tamika Mallory called Louis Farrakhan "the greatest of all time." Her fellow organizer, Linda Sarsour, said: "Only Jews . . . are ones that condone violence against Arabs and are cool with mosques being attacked."

I have no problem standing here in the well of this Chamber rejecting it. I don't know what is taking so long for House Democratic leadership to schedule a vote on H. Res. 72, so they can join us in condemning it as well.

There is a freshman Representative from Michigan, Representative RASHIDA TLAIB, who supports the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement. She invited Abbas Hamideh to attend her swearing-in events this month. Abbas said, in 2016: "Israel does not have a right to exist. The terrorist entity is illegal and has no basis to exist, other than a delusional, ISIS-like ideology."

Also this month, that person said: "I'm willing to go back to my country Palestine, if the Zionist terrorists go back to Poland. Deal? Let's get that ball rolling ASAP. Get off Twitter, and let's make that happen."

This same Representative said of those who support Israel: "They forgot what country they represent."

Well, as someone who has been in the United States Army for over 15 years, has deployed into combat in defense of this country, a former Army paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division, never once in my life have I forgotten what country I represent.

It is kind of ironic that someone who, on their victory night, wraps themselves in the Palestinian flag is trying to lecture us, especially for supporting our Nation's greatest ally in Israel.

The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement is one that is founded by someone named Omar Barghouti, who said: "We are witnessing the rapid demise of Zionism, and nothing can be done save it, for Zionism is intent on killing itself. I, for one, support euthanasia."

He also said: "Many of the methods of collective and individual 'punishment' meted out to Palestinian civilians at the hands of young, racist, often sadistic and every impervious Israeli soldiers . . . are reminiscent of common Nazi practices against the Jews."

So when you are embracing BDS, know that this is what the founder of BDS says. This goes beyond anti-Israeli hatred. It is anti-Semitic hatred.

What is taking so long? This Chamber that had no problem rushing to this

well and nearly unanimously rejecting white supremacy has a problem rejecting this?

Meanwhile, our students, in the name of the BDS movement, on college campuses all across this entire country, are being subjected to blatant anti-Semitism.

For example, at New York University, the student government passed a resolution supporting BDS. The Bronfman Center for Jewish Life was temporarily closed in response to threatening Twitter posts by a student who expressed "a desire for Zionists to die."

Other college campuses include a University of Michigan professor who refused to write a letter of recommendation for a qualified student to study abroad solely because she was seeking to study abroad in Israel.

A Students for Justice in Palestine cofounder and University of California, Berkeley, professor spoke at a national conference and shared an anti-Semitic meme of an Orthodox Jewish person in his presentation.

At Warren Wilson College, an invited speaker said: "Jews are doing the same thing to the Palestinians as the Nazis did to the Jews."

The examples go on, whether it was Charlottesville, where the leadership said that Jews must die, that he wanted all Jews to die, or whether it was the shooting that took place in Pittsburgh.

We are motivated, my colleagues and I, to this Chamber to stand against anti-Israel and anti-Semitic hatred. Everyone in this Chamber should join us.

I went kindergarten through 12th grade, college, law school, 4 years of Active Duty, and I never once experienced anti-Semitism. It has no business infiltrating American politics; it has no business infiltrating the campuses of United States universities and colleges; and it has no business infiltrating the Halls of Congress.

I encourage an immediate vote on H. Res. 72.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, you can see why Representative LEE ZELDIN is thought so highly of in the United States House of Congress. I appreciate his remarks and, even more, his passion.

When we talk about going through some tough things in life, I don't believe there is anyone that I know who can relate to the journey that our whip, Representative STEVE SCALISE, has been through.

I will never forget getting word that Thursday, and we did not know for sure whether Representative SCALISE would actually make it through the day, but somehow he did. The thing that I remembered most is his gift with policy. There are lots of things that he does well. The thing that I will always remember is how he let his faith shine through all of this darkness.

I yield to Louisiana's finest and our whip, Representative STEVE SCALISE.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina for yielding and for bringing attention to what we are here to talk about tonight.

This would have been the State of the Union that the President was initially invited by the Speaker to deliver back on January 3. I am glad, Mr. Speaker, that, ultimately, we got a new date that the Speaker has invited the President to come to this Chamber, the people's House, on February 5, when President Trump finally will have the opportunity to address the people of this country on the state of Union, as the Constitution prescribes.

We have seen, over time, it has been done in many different ways. George Washington started the tradition in 1790 by actually addressing a joint session of Congress, as opposed to just sending a letter. It has been done different ways over time.

But over the last 50 years, it has been done here in this House Chamber every single year, and I am glad that we will finally have that opportunity to see the tradition continue.

Mr. Speaker, when you talk about the state of the Union and some of the things that President Trump has been fighting for, the main things he has been fighting for are to deliver to the American people on getting the economy back on track and keeping America safe.

Part of keeping America safe, Mr. Speaker, means securing America's border. That is really what was at the heart of the fight over the last month of this government shutdown.

A lot of people in Washington are so focused, Mr. Speaker, on who is to blame or who won the week, who is the winner or who is the loser. You hear everybody saying that, okay, well, NANCY PELOSI was able to hold the State of the Union hostage and somehow that is a victory for the American people that she denied the President the ability to come here to the people's House to share his message.

I wouldn't be bragging about that as a victory if I were Speaker PELOSI, because, ultimately, what that means is that she is afraid of having the American people hear the message that President Trump had to say.

That message will be distributed next week, but part of that message involves why we need to secure the border. That is really at the heart of this debate.

Why do we need to secure America's border? There are some people questioning whether or not we need to secure America's border. The good news, Mr. Speaker, is that there are not many people in this country that wonder whether or not we should secure the border. The bad news is that of the few people who are in that category, one of them is the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

We are going to continue to have this debate. On February 5, when you hear President Trump give this message, I am sure some of the things we are

going to hear are the horror stories that we have had because we don't have a secure border.

I have experienced something, and I have heard firsthand from constituents in my district about what is at stake. I had the opportunity to get a call from the mother of a fire chief in south Louisiana, Spencer Chauvin.

Spencer Chauvin was responding to a call, like he did. He was a public servant, a fire chief in St. John the Baptist Parish. As he was responding to that call, Mr. Speaker, he was killed by someone who is in this country illegally.

He never got to go home that night to his 6-year-old and 8-year-old. He doesn't get to talk to his mother anymore.

But after his mother and I talked, she mailed me this just last week, Mr. Speaker, and it is a coin. It is a coin in tribute to Spencer Chauvin. I keep this coin with me as a reminder of what is at stake in human terms, because we could talk about who won the day or who won the week, but is it really victory when the result of Speaker PELOSI's victory is that there may be more victims like Spencer Chauvin across this country because we haven't secured our border?

President Trump didn't campaign saying he needed \$5.7 billion to build a wall. President Trump talked about building a wall to secure our border. When he became President, the experts who risk their lives, men and women who are not partisans, men and women who wake up every day, whether it was Barack Obama President or whether it is Donald Trump President, they just go to the border and risk their lives to keep the bad people out.

There is a way for good people to come in. If you want to come in legally like a million people every single year who we let in our country legally, there is a legal way to do it. If you are seeking asylum from around the world, Mr. Speaker, there is a legal way to do it.

In fact, this caravan that you saw coming into America, they stormed through Mexico's border on the southern border of Mexico. They stormed through that border. They wanted to storm through our border because we don't have a physical barrier. They were offered asylum by Mexico, and they were offered work permits by Mexico, and they turned that down.

Are you really an asylum seeker if you turn down asylum along the way here? It is not about asylum. It is about whether or not we are going to get back to rule of law and secure our border.

The experts who risk their lives say it is going to cost \$5.7 billion to secure our border, to give them the tools they need, and that includes a physical barrier.

Now that we are seeing a growing list of Democrats, including the majority leader, STENY HOYER, say physical barriers ought to be part of the solution,

in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, what I would say, when we open back the people's House to the President on February 5, is let's heed the call of Republicans and Democrats alike who recognize we need to secure our southern border so that we can get back to rule of law and prevent more Spencer Chauvins from becoming victims to an open border.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. Whip, Representative STEVE SCALISE, for his example and courage in standing up for what is right and true.

Many Members whom I have run across in this House are studious in their work, but I don't know of any more than Representative GARY PALMER.

In this town, there is probably a dinner every night somewhere. Mr. PALMER chooses to take his time going back to his office, preparing for the next day, constantly reading and staying informed.

I was born in the State that he represents. I lived there only 6 months. We have a mutual love for the Crimson Tide. It is my privilege to acknowledge and yield to Representative GARY PALMER from Alabama.

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. The gentleman just acknowledged that I have no social life, but that is fine.

I want to talk a little bit about healthcare. Here is a fact that my Democratic colleagues were desperately trying to keep from the public. Not only do the Republicans support providing health insurance coverage for those with preexisting conditions, but we actually passed legislation that did just that with the American Health Care Act of 2017.

It included an amendment that Representative DAVID SCHWEIKERT of Arizona and I introduced that ensured that anyone with a preexisting condition could purchase health insurance. The Palmer-Schweikert amendment established a risk-sharing plan that would allow any individual with a preexisting condition to purchase insurance at the same price as a healthy individual.

It was actually modeled after a successful State-based program in the State of Maine. Instead of billions of dollars being paid out by the Federal Government in bailouts for health insurance companies, our plan, funded by having the majority of the premiums paid for those with preexisting conditions, transferred into a fund, a risk-sharing fund.

This represents an alternative approach to ObamaCare's guaranteed issue provision, which priced everyone as sick, resulting in far higher premiums. As a matter of fact, the premiums got so high that insurance companies literally began pulling out of whole States.

What our amendment did was, if someone had a preexisting condition, they would come to an insurance company, fill out a health survey, mark

down if they had had a heart attack or cancer. The insurance company would sell them insurance at the same price as anybody else. But when they paid their premiums, 90 percent of the premiums would go into this risk-sharing agreement.

□ 1630

The insurance company would only keep 10 percent. Now, if the person, the individual became very sick, if it became very expensive, the insurance company would pay the first \$7,500 and then 10 percent of the next \$25,000, so the most that they were out was \$10,000. The risk-sharing plan would pick up the balance and reimburse the providers at the same rate as Medicare.

The way this worked was not only did the premiums go into the risk-sharing plan, 90 percent of the premiums, but the rest of us would pay anywhere from \$5 to \$10 a month on our premiums. That would go into the risk-sharing plan, and our amendment was backed up with \$38 billion.

What this allowed us to do was create a situation where the actuaries could actually be more predictive in what the cost would be; and, as a result, it lowered premiums for everyone. So not only did it cover people with preexisting conditions, but everyone else's premiums came down.

As a matter of fact, in that 20- to 30-year-old age group, it came down 41 percent; 30 to 40 years old came down 33 percent; 40 to 50, 25 percent; 50 to 60, 11.6 percent; and that pre-Medicare 60 to 65 came down 5.9 percent. So what we were doing was trying to repair the American healthcare system, doing it in a way that made sense for people.

Not only that, we have other options that we want to present. For instance, one of the biggest uninsured populations is young people. It doesn't make sense to spend the amount of money you have to spend to pay your premiums when a lot of those folks are earning lower wages.

So we want to set up a plan where you could buy short-term insurance, buy what you need, what you can afford for that time in your life, and it would be for 1 year. Depending on what you bought, your premiums could come down 85 percent. If you needed to extend it, you could extend it for another 3 years. That is transition insurance.

In addition to that, the vast majority of people in America who have a job work for a small business, and small businesses aren't part of a larger group. So we wanted to set up association group plans so that if you are a small business and your city set up an association group plan, you could be in that. Or if you are a farmer, you could be a member of an association group plan that the Farm Bureau established, and premiums there are projected to come down by as much as 50 percent.

The Republicans have the best ideas for repairing our healthcare system, making it affordable, and keeping our promise, a promise that was broken repeatedly: If you like your doctor, you

can keep your doctor. If you like your insurance, you can keep your doctor.

It is not just about the cost. It is about improving outcomes and helping people live better and healthier.

Mr. WALKER. Madam Speaker, as I enter my fifth year serving in these hallowed Halls, I am still in awe of the sacred duty we have been given. We are truly the people's House. However, I believe that the people's House should give a voice to every single American, including the unborn.

This past Congress, we were able to pass, in the House, two major bills protecting life. The Born-Alive Protection Act and the Pain-Capable Child Protection Act both affirmed the humanity of the unborn and our firm belief that they are worthy of protection. Sadly, these bills were not taken up in the Senate, and with the new Democratic-led House, their future is uncertain.

But each January gives us hope. It is a critical time to talk about the importance of life and what it means to all Americans. Not only does the beginning of the year bring new goals and ambitions, but it contains important events that celebrate life, justice, and human potential.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose life we recently celebrated, knew this potential. He said that any person cannot succeed if he or she is willing to "sacrifice the future of his children for immediate personal comfort." He also professed the value and hope of every single human life.

We also witnessed tens of thousands of marchers just recently arriving from all across America to march and boldly speak for those who can't speak for themselves.

Last week, we saw what my friend Benjamin Watson says is a "sad and evil day." Throughout history, there are pivotal moments that sober us up to the point of engagement. Such a moment happened 1 week ago as we watched the New York State Assembly celebrate expanding the path for late-term abortions in their State.

Mr. Watson said this: "It is a sad and evil day when the murder of our most innocent and vulnerable is celebrated with such overwhelming exuberance."

This law allows for abortion up to birth, practically without limits. It authorizes the legal murder of a fully viable human baby. This is what was being celebrated. This is why the Freedom Tower was lit bright pink on a cold winter's night.

That celebration is now seared into our Nation's conscience, and many are now realizing, more than ever, that we should not, that we must not, that we cannot look the other way. Even our sleeping churches are beginning to awaken to this just and righteous cause.

New York already faces a cataclysm. In New York City, more than 500 abortions are performed for every 1,000 births. These numbers are more staggering for African American babies, more of whom are now aborted than actually born.

The Governor of New York has even suggested that those who are pro-life are not—and get this—welcome in his State.

I support federalism and the idea that New York can make its own laws for New York. My question is not a legal one, but a moral one. How long will our American society allow this injustice? Can we expect the new House Democratic majority to continue down this path? Will there be consequences?

As my friend Kay Cole James likes to say: "The right to life is the most fundamental of all civil rights."

To revive the American Dream, we must reclaim America's soul. That means standing with the majority of the American people who reject the Federal funding abortions; that means putting the life and health of women and babies ahead of the desires of abortion giants like Planned Parenthood.

But in many cases, we must also regain our credibility in valuing the birth at all stages of life. Do we care—tough question. Do we care, 20 weeks after the baby is born, as much as we value the baby 20 weeks before birth?

In closing, Mark Twain said this: The two most important days are when you are born and when you find out why. How many babies, how many children will never get to discover either?

Please continue to stand for those who have no voice. In the name that is everything just, never stop raising yours.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

PUT A BORDER SECURITY PLAN ON THE FLOOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GAETZ. Madam Speaker, here we are, 2½ weeks away from a potential government shutdown. It is not 5 yet, and I am on the floor of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress, and there is functionally nobody here. I choose to address the body from the podium, rather than the well, to illustrate this point.

Now, anywhere else in America, if you were facing some cataclysmic event like a shutdown or a shutoff or a business losing a major client, you would have the whole team here working, getting together, workshopping solutions, offering amendments, ripening proposals and actually doing the work that we are supposed to be doing for the country.

With this 2½ weeks to the shutdown, it is notable to me that Congress got into town last night and we are leaving tomorrow. It is like we have got the French workweek around here. And the Democrats are in control. They are driving, Madam Speaker.

So my call is to Speaker PELOSI:

If you have got a border security package, put it on the floor.

If you have got an idea on how to make sure that our country is safer, respecting the rule of law, creating a climate of rising wages for our workers, making sure that people in their neighborhoods are safe and not having to face the gangs and the cartels and the criminals and MS-13, let's see it.

Democrats often were right to criticize Republicans during the 115th Congress that we had constrained rules, limited debates. We had diminished opportunity for Members to offer amendments. But we don't even have a bill. It kind of makes me wonder why.

It may be the Democrats can come to no consensus on border security. I mean, heck, we have got a group of them who probably are from Rust Belt States, from the Midwest, where a lot of their constituents voted for President Trump and believe that we ought to have physical barriers, believe that we ought to be a nation of laws and borders—pretty rational stuff. And then you have got this other wing of the Democratic Party, Madam Speaker, that thinks that walls and borders are racist and immoral.

How is it that the country is expecting us to lead—you to lead, in the majority—if we aren't able to at least come to this floor and offer concrete solutions?

You know what we voted on these last couple of days? We have been voting on whether or not we are going to establish studies on the potential harms of cryptocurrency. Now, that may be a virtuous objective, but it seems less poignant and less timely than the impending shutdown we potentially have in 2½ weeks.

We took votes on whether or not the Department of Homeland Security should offer more mentorship and training to law enforcement on Tribal lands—also virtuous, but certainly not what we ought to be doing here.

Madam Speaker, each and every day, when we walk these Halls, we stand under the busts and statues and murals of some of the greatest Americans to have ever lived. There are times when I feel we are unworthy to cast our gaze upon them and upon their likeness because here we are, trusted to fulfill the promise of the country, and it is not even 5 yet on a workday, and I am the only one here and everybody is packing their bags getting ready to go home.

It is a travesty and it is a shame brought upon this House. I certainly hope in the coming weeks we can do better.

Madam Speaker, I thank your indulgence, and I yield back the balance of my time.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE MODERNIZATION OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to section 201(b) of House Resolution 6, 116th Congress, and the order of the House of January